Vancouver metro

Your essential daily news | MONDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2016

Political finger puppets and other uber-Canadian gift ideas metroLIFE

High 6°C/Low 4°C Rain

Aleyan Orozco, 5, and sister Yethali, 7, following their first day allowed back at school Dec. 15, three months after they were booted from classes over a bureaucratic delay in their Langley resident parents' immigration paperwork. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO

PROVINCE SCHOOLED

We should look to Ontario law that states all school-age residents 'unlawfully in Canada' can enrol metroNEWS

Community centres open to homeless

WEATHER

City converts centres in West End, Britannia and Creekside

Wanyee Li
Metro | Vancouver

With homeless people in Vancouver facing a night of rain and snow, the City of Vancouver took the unusual step of opening three community centres overnight for anyone seeking shelter Sunday night.

Up to 10 centimetres of snow in some regions of Metro Vancouver fell on Sunday and as much as 20 millimetres of rain was forecast to hit Vancouver Sunday night, according to Environment Canada.

About 40 people used Britannia and Creekside community centres Saturday night and the city added West End Community Centre to the list of warming shelters people can go to Sunday, according to a release.

The Khalsa Diwan Society, opened its temple's doors Saturday, welcoming 17 people that night, and did so again Sunday. Hot drinks and water were available at the warming shelters. People with their own bedding were welcome to bring it with them and stay for the night.

Yellow Cab Taxis offered to transport people to the warming shelters free of charge.

There are 956 permanent and 195 temporary winter shelter beds in Vancouver.

Residents can call 2-1-1 to inquire about room in the shelters.

The city says it has used 230,000 litres of brine and 5,172 tonnes of salt so far this season. It is bringing in more salt in anticipation of more snowstorms this winter.

Temperatures will return to a more seasonal high of 7 C Monday, according to Environment Canada.

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metro NEWS
Your essential daily news

Man discovers sisters he saved from fire in 1951 are his next-door neighbours. **Canada**

Illegal fees for work common

FOREIGN WORKERS

Advocates call for better employment law enforcement

Jen St. Denis
Metro | Vancouver

Richard Eugenio, left, with NDP MLA Mable Elmore. Eugenio paid $15,000 to a recruiter in order to get a job in Canada, a practice that is common even though it is prohibited by B.C. law. JEN ST. DENIS/METRO

Advocates for temporary foreign workers say workers are routinely paying thousands of dollars to recruiters in order to work in Canada, even though the practice is prohibited by B.C. law.

Richard Eugenio, who is from the Philippines, paid $15,000 to a recruiter to get a trucking job in Surrey. But when he arrived, he found he was being paid for six-hour days when he was actually working eight to 12 hours.

Almost one year after arriving in Canada and with time running out on his work permit, he's now looking for another employer. But because he's here as a temporary foreign worker, any potential employer would have to successfully demonstrate they cannot find a Canadian worker for the job.

Being charged thousands of dollars to get a job is "the standard experience for temporary foreign workers in B.C.," said Mable Elmore, NDP MLA for Vancouver-Kensington. Sometimes workers arrive, only to find the job is nonexistent or not what was promised.

B.C. recruiters commonly charge temporary foreign workers between $2,000 and $10,000, according to research conducted by the Westcoast Domestic Workers Association.

It's illegal to charge a worker for a job in B.C., but advocates say the province does not adequately enforce its own employment standards adequately, relying on a complaint-driven model where the workers must make the complaint within six months of the offence.

They've started a campaign called Rise Up Against Recruitment and are calling on the B.C. government to follow the model of provinces like Saskatchewan and Manitoba in requiring the recruiter and the employer they represent to be financially liable if employment standards law is broken.

"So it doesn't matter if the recruitment starts in the Philippines and it has many spots along the way, the important part is that it ends in B.C.," said Alexandra Rodgers.

"In other provinces they'll put forward a bond, $20,000 in Saskatchewan and $10,000 in Manitoba, before you can be issued a licence as a recruiter and that bond is money that can be given if fees are charged illegally," Rodgers said.

The group also wants the six-month complaint window to be extended to three years, and for all employers to be required to provide a free information session to temporary foreign workers to inform them of their rights.

> **"So it doesn't matter if the recruitment starts in the Philippines, the important part is that it ends in B.C.**
> Alexandra Rodgers

Communications staff for Shirley Bond, Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training, emailed this statement to Metro:

"There are very clear rules for employment agencies in our province. Employment agencies are not allowed to charge fees to anyone, regardless of their immigration status. We expect people to follow the rules and if anyone has a complaint they should contact the Employment Standards Branch."

The federal government is currently reviewing the program, and a recent report suggested increasing the number of low-wage workers. That part of the program was strictly curtailed in 2014 following reports of a number of abuses.

"Typically the problems that we see when workers are more vulnerable is in the low-skilled professions," Elmore said.

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School Act confusing families

EDUCATION

Ministry could issue directive, immigration lawyer says

David P. Ball
Metro | Vancouver

Immigration experts, lawyers, advocates and teachers are calling for British Columbia's education minister to clear up confusion surrounding which children are allowed into the province's schools.

This week, Metro investigated the cases of three families in three school districts who, for different reasons, found their children denied a public education over parents' immigration status.

All three families, with the help of advocates taking up their cause, were finally able to change administrators' minds.

Surrey newlyweds Guillermo Gonzales and Sheryl Herrera — he a nine-year Canadian resident who became a citizen last year, and she from Mexico on a work visa to work as a university administrator — never imagined how hard it would be to get Herrera's two children into school.

He's currently in process of applying to sponsor his wife, one year after she arrived in Canada with two kids, five and eight. But even though both reside in Whalley — within the Surrey schools catchment area — the school district's answer was "no."

"We got married in January," Gonzales told Metro in an interview. "We went to the school with her children, but they would not let them in.

"We met all the requirements, and met with them to raise the issue. But they said no. They said I have to adopt her children, but that's not actually the case. It was unbelievable."

Surrey residents Sheryl Herrera and Guillermo Gonzales hold a photo of Herrera's five- and eight-year-old children on a phone. Despite living in Whalley, their local school district balked at enrolling the kids unless Gonzales adopted them. DAVID P. BALL/METRO

According to the B.C. School Act, "A person is entitled to enrol in an educational program provided by the board of a school district if the person is of school age, and is resident in that school district."

An education ministry spokesman said, "eligibility for free public education is based on residence rather than citizenship or immigration status."

Last week, education minister Mike Bernier refused Metro's repeated interview requests over three days. Instead, a spokesperson said via email: "All districts must adhere to the School Act in B.C."

Immigration lawyer Laura Best, with Embarkation Law, said an explicit provincial directive would reduce the different interpretations of the School Act, which she said is particularly "frustrating as a lawyer to see discrepancies across different school boards."

One path to prevent such discrepancies, she suggested, would be for the Ministry of Education to "put out a policy clarification as to how they interpret the School Act," and what approach it expects districts — which oversee their own enrolment policies based on the Act — to follow.

"There is nothing in the School Act that says a parent's immigrant status is relevant to whether their children are entitled to a public education in B.C.," she said. "The ministry could issue a very clear directive to the school districts."

B.C. could also consider the Ontario Education Act, she suggested, which leaves little room for ambiguity.

"A person who is otherwise entitled to be admitted to a school and who is less than eighteen years of age shall not be refused admission because the person or the person's parent or guardian is unlawfully in Canada," Ontario's law states.

Should B.C. follow in Ontario's footsteps?

"I think it is unnecessary," Best argued. "The way the (B.C. School) Act reads now is clear that immigration status is not a requirement to register in school.

"Simply having a directive from the ministry, or a court decision, would help with consistency in the province."

A member of the School for All campaign, Nassim Elbardouh, said the year-and-a-half old organization has recently printed more than 1,000 information cards for immigrant parents, translated in Spanish, Punjabi, Arabic and French.

Its message is that schools should welcome all children — and when that doesn't happen, School for All may be able to help advocate.

"If your family, friend or child is coming up against barriers, come let us know and we'll try to help," she said. "The more people hear about us, and the more we do in the community, the more we can advocate for families.

"But if people really believe in this ... we have to get away from just individual families. This is a basic right."

Herrera and Gonzales were able to get their kids into class in October — but only after they approached advocates with Sanctuary Health and their MLA Bruce Ralston.

"The children are so happy now," Gonzales said. "Every day, they never stop learning, there are always new lessons."

Herrera chimed in: "For me, education is so important for their development; children just need to learn."

> **We have to get away from just individual families. This is a basic right.** Nassim Elbardouh, School for All

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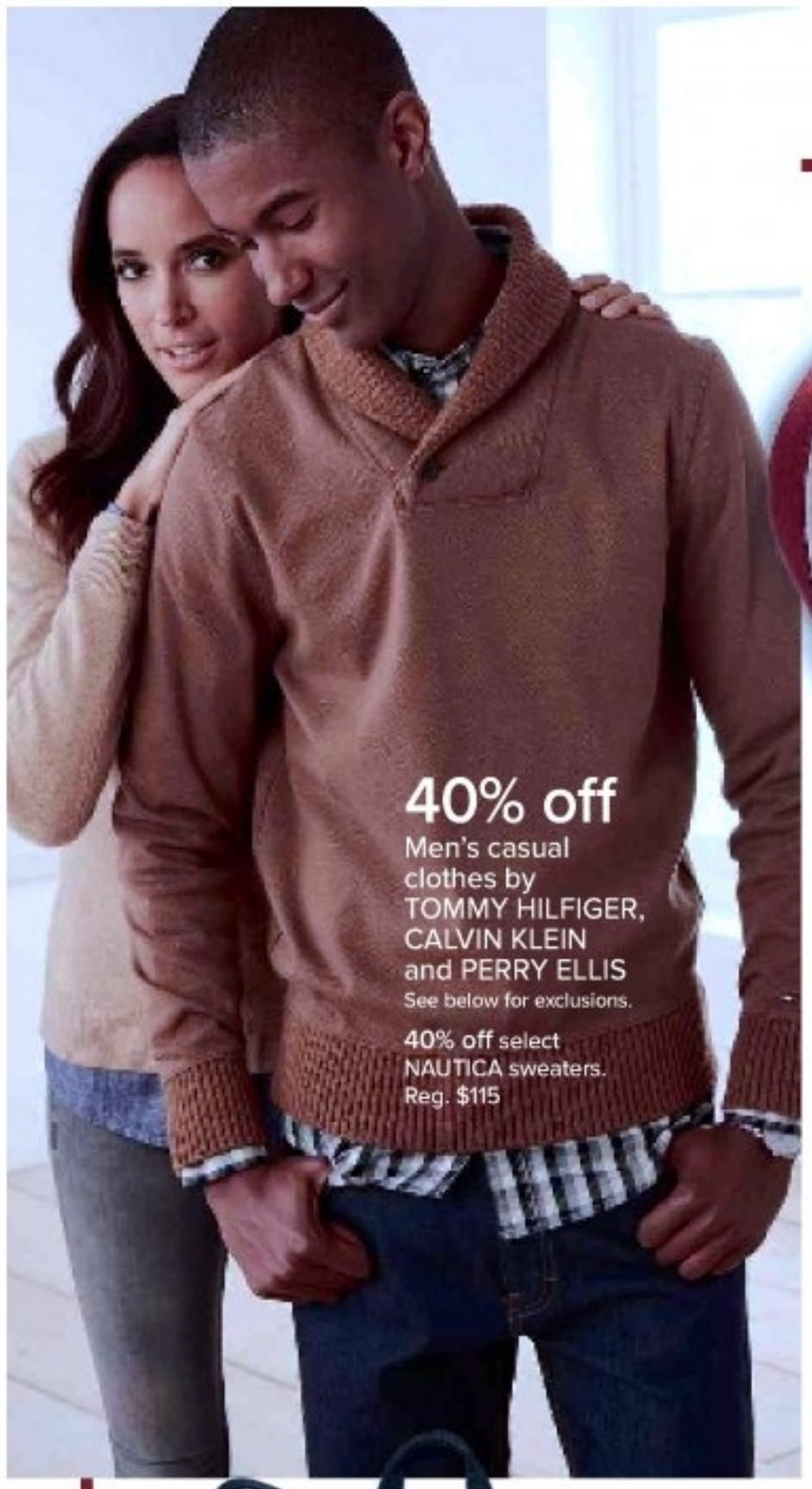

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$122 **GIVENCHY** Live Irresistible eau de parfum spray, 75 mL

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HUDSON'S BAY

Public mourns fall of Aleppo

SYRIA

Hundreds come out for Saturday vigil

David P. Ball
Metro | Vancouver

"Assad, go to Hell — Aleppo, we are with you," shouted Mohammed Alsaleh, a Syrian refugee living in Vancouver, through a megaphone on Saturday night.

Alsaleh spoke to a crowd of several hundred attending a candlelight vigil against dictator Bashar al-Assad outside the Vancouver Art Gallery, as the strongman took back the city of Aleppo, Syria, from rebels.

"Assad might have won this battle but the war is not over," he told the gathered crowd, many of them fellow Syrian refugees who have made a new home in Canada after fleeing their homeland's five-year civil war, which broke out after the regime opened fire on Arab Spring demonstrations and rebels took up arms.

The conflict has pulled in major world powers — Russia and Iran propping up Assad, and Gulf states and the U.S. backing the armed opposition — and it's become a political quagmire.

"Humanity is dead and nobody is really caring about what is happening in Syria," Alsaleh lamented.

For another rally speaker, Zarah Tinholt with the group Refugees Matter, the United Nations Security Council's deadlock over whether to intervene in the conflict need not paralyze the rest of the world.

"We as Canadians are demanding change ... not only from our politicians in Canada but from politicians across the world," she said. "We are not paralyzed. We have spent five years thinking that we are paralyzed.

"Good intentions are not good enough when people are being slaughtered across the world. Those people are exactly like us, they have families, they have children, they have futures."

She called on fellow Canadians to "stand up, get active and get vocal," at the local event organized by University of British Columbia student Sawsan Al Najjar.

In an email, Tinholt said the vigil attracted more than 200 people, the "vast majority" of them Syrian refugees who found asylum in Canada, she wrote.

On Saturday night in Vancouver, several hundred people called for international action to stop the killing of civilians in Syria, and to push the United Nations out of an impasse over how to respond to war crimes there. ASHIK HOSSAIN/CONTRIBUTED/BREAKBOX MEDIA

> **It has been five years that the international community has failed Aleppo and failed Syria. We've stood by and we have sent our prayers, we've sent our good wishes, as people continued to be bombed. Our politicians have failed.**
>
> Zarah Tinholt, Refugees Matter

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Contents from Mount Polley's toxic tailings pond going down the Hazeltine Creek into Quesnel Lake near Likely, B.C. Aug. 5, 2014 — a day after the dam broke. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mining industry's greener solution

ENVIRONMENT

Researcher's innovation could be a game-changer

Wanyee Li
Metro | Vancouver

A UBC researcher believes he has a solution that will eliminate the need for tailing ponds and help power plants put out reduced carbon dioxide emissions.

If the project — in the semi-finals for the $20 million NRG Cosia Carbon XPrize competition — is successful, it could be a game changer for the mining industry.

"So if we're trying to get social licence for mining, it's not great if we're dumping a lot of CO_2 into the atmosphere and producing acid drainage," said UBC mineralogist Lee Groat, who is working with Terra CO_2 Technologies on this project.

"This helps solve both problems by mixing them together."

When combined, acid drainage and carbon dioxide create a stable, gel-like compound that hardens over several hours. That solid substance, iron carbonate, could potentially be mixed with cement for construction purposes, said Groat.

"Making cement is a huge emitter of CO_2. So this could stretch the cement so that you would need less of it in building," he said.

> **This could stretch the cement so that you would need less of it.**
> Lee Groat

"We're starting to look at uses and that's pretty exciting."

The technology, an idea from Doug Eaton, CEO of Terra's parent company, could eliminate the need for tailing ponds, which is where mining companies currently store acid drainage.

Over time, tailing ponds can leak which can lead to environmental damage in the surrounding areas.

The current work-around is to combine acid drainage with lime, but making lime takes "a tremendous effort" and creates a lot of carbon dioxide emissions as well, he explained.

The next challenge for Groat and his team of five researchers is to build a pilot plant where they can create iron carbonate in the field to prove feasibility.

He hopes to have that up and running by the end of the summer, before the finalists for the XPrize are chosen.

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Canadian among 10 dead in attacks

MIDDLE EAST

Another from Canada injured in Jordan

Gunmen ambushed Jordanian police in a series of attacks Sunday, including at a Crusader castle popular with tourists, killing a woman visiting from Canada, seven officers and two local civilians, officials said.

CBC News has reported the Canadian killed was Linda Vatcher, 62, of Burgeo, N.L. The retired teacher was in Jordan on vacation. Among the 34 people wounded is Vatcher's son Chris, who works in the Middle East.

Sunday's attack is one of the bloodiest attacks in Jordan in recent memory.

CBC has identified the Canadian killed as Linda Vatcher, 62, of Burgeo, N.L. CONTRIBUTED

Foreign Affairs Minister Stéphane Dion offered the government's condolences to the victims' families.

Security officials said in a statement late Sunday that at least four gunmen were killed and that troops continued to search the area. The statement said large amounts of weapons had been seized. It made no reference to local media reports that at one point, the attackers had held hostages.

The shootings were the latest in a series of attacks that have challenged this pro-Western kingdom's claim to be an oasis of calm in a region threatened by Islamic extremists.

The killing of the Canadian tourist could further hurt Jordan's embattled tourism sector, which has declined sharply since the Islamic State group seized large parts of neighbouring Syria and Iraq two years ago.

After the attack, the Canadian embassy in Jordan tweeted a warning to Canadians, advising them against all travel to Karak until further notice.

The federal government said in an emailed statement Sunday afternoon that Canadian officials were working with local authorities to gather information.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attacks in and near the central town of Karak, about 140 kilometres south of the capital, Amman.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Security forces stand at the scene of an attack in the central town of Karak, Jordan, on Sunday. BEN CURTIS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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NEWFOUNDLAND

Answer to 65-year-old mystery next door

Kip Malone, centre, with Margaret Fowler, left, and Barbara Earle. COURTESY BARBARA EARLE

Edward "Kip" Malone says he has been dogged by the "mystery" of what ever happened to two girls he rescued from a house fire in St. John's in 1951, only to find the answer living right next door.

After about four decades working in Ontario, 77-year-old Malone returned to Newfoundland this fall to retire in Conception Bay South. A week and a half after moving in to their new home, the Malones were welcomed by their next-door neighbour, Margaret Fowler, with packages of frozen fish. Malone — nicknamed "Kip" — discovered that he and Fowler hailed from the same part of St. John's, in fact, he had an interesting story about the street he grew up on.

On Dec. 20, 1951, Malone walked past a row of what he described as three-storey, "cardboard" houses, when he heard the sound of a panicked voice coming from above.

Malone says he ran up the stairs and grabbed a frightened five-year-old girl, who refused to leave without her sister. He waded through the haze into another room where he found a three-year-old girl "hiding away," and hauled the sisters outside.

For six and a half decades, Malone says his story didn't have an ending.

"It was always a mystery to me what became of (the girls)," Malone said. "I had never laid eyes on these people since."

Listening to Malone, Fowler said she got goosebumps. She said in an interview that she reached over to give Malone a hug and squeeze his hand.

"I was that little girl," Fowler told him. "I wouldn't be here today if it wasn't for you."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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DEVELOPMENT

From jail to sail for ex-prison

The federal government is being asked to speed up the pace of redevelopment of the land and buildings that once comprised Canada's most notorious prison to make room for a top-notch sailing school.

A local group has put forward a $300-million redevelopment plan for Kingston Penitentiary that would see the jail along the shores of Lake Ontario turned into an elite training centre for Canadian sailors, alongside a new wind power research institute.

The group, which includes former Olympic sailor John Curtis, former Kingston mayor Harvey Rosen and George Hood, a one-time head of fundraising at Queen's University, has been working on the idea since the last inmate left Kingston Pen in 2013.

HISTORY

- The surrounding Lake Ontario waters, considered one of the best sites internationally for freshwater sailing, hosted sailing events for the 1976 Montreal Olympics.

The proposal would open up the facility to the water by tearing down all but the northern wall with the large, heavy, barred doors at the prison's entrance. Inside the sprawling property would be two museums documenting the jail's controversial history, as well as new commercial space and condominiums.

The proposal is a limited time offer: Hood said the cash comes off the table come spring if federal and local officials show no interest.

The group isn't asking for any financial help from federal or municipal coffers. What they are asking is for the federal government to sell them the land — and soon. "They're funding projects across the country to try and stimulate the economy," Hood said in an interview.

"Along we come with an offer to buy a moribund, dormant federal asset, use our money to do it, and it's not going to cost them a cent and we're going to create probably 300 jobs."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

ALBERTA

Fire chief who led the Fort McMurray fight retiring

The man who led a fight against "the beast" is planning to move on from his role as Fort McMurray fire chief.

Darby Allen became the face of the community's scramble to beat back a wildfire that laid waste to 10 per cent of the city.

Nearly 90,000 people fled the flames and were forced out their homes for at least a month, though no one died as a direct result of the fire.

Allen, 59, is planning to retire from his post in February and leave Fort McMurray.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Suicide blast kills dozens in Yemen

TERRORISM

Daesh affiliate claims attack that targeted military camp

A suicide bomber blew himself up outside a military camp in the southern Yemeni city of Aden on Sunday morning, killing at least 52 soldiers, a security official said. Daesh's Yemen-based affiliate claimed responsibility.

Abdel-Rahman al-Naqeeb said 63 people were also injured in the blast. Security officials said that preliminary investigations showed the blast was the work of a bomber wearing an explosives-laden vest. The attack took place as soldiers lined up to collect their salaries, they said.

The Daesh affiliate claimed responsibility for the attack in a statement posted on Daesh-run Aamaq news agency. It identified the bomber as Abu Hashim al-Radfani and published a photo of him smiling and wearing a white vest as he stood next to the group's black flag. It also posted photos it said were of the blast that it claimed killed nearly 70. It was not possible to immediately verify the claim. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Soldiers gather the site of a suicide bomb at a base in the city of Aden, Yemen, on Sunday. WAEL QUBADY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Zsa Zsa Gabor dead at 99

Zsa Zsa Gabor, the jet-setting Hungarian actress and socialite who helped invent a new kind of fame out of multiple marriages, conspicuous wealth and jaded wisdom about the glamorous life, has died. She was 99.

The middle and most famous of the sisters Gabor died Sunday of a heart attack at her Bel-Air home, her husband, Prince Frederic von Anhalt, said.

Gabor had been hospitalized repeatedly since she broke her right hip in July 2010 after a fall at her home. She already had to use a wheelchair after being partly paralyzed in a 2002 car accident and suffering a stroke in 2005. Most of her right leg was amputated in January 2011 because of gangrene and the left leg was also threatened. Her misfortunes were duly reported to the media by von Anhalt.

The great aunt of Paris Hilton and a spiritual matriarch to the Kardashians, Simpsons and other tabloid favourites, she was the original hall-of-mirrors celebrity, famous for being famous for being famous. Starting in the 1940s, Gabor rose from beauty queen to millionaire's wife to minor television personality to minor film actress to major public character. With no special talent, no hit TV series such as her sister Eva's Green Acres, Zsa Zsa nevertheless was a long-running hit just being Zsa Zsa — her accent drenched in diamonds, her name synonymous with frivolity and camp as she winked and carried on about men, dahling, and the droll burdens of the idle rich. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Zsa Zsa Gabor in 1986 THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WORLD NEWS

3-year-old boy killed in road-rage incident

A three-year-old boy being taken on a shopping trip by his grandmother was killed in a road-rage shooting when a driver opened fire on the grandmother's car because he thought she "wasn't moving fast enough at a stop sign," police said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Trump says China should keep U.S. military drone

China says it seized a U.S. Navy unmanned underwater glider in the South China Sea, but will give it back, despite President-elect Donald Trump saying they should be told "we don't want the drone they stole back" and "let them keep it!" THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SYRIA

'Atrocities' feared for those still in Aleppo

France struck a compromise Sunday with Russia on a UN resolution that it said would prevent "mass atrocities" in besieged areas of Aleppo, where thousands of trapped civilians and rebel fighters await evacuation in freezing temperatures.

On the ground, prospects for swift evacuations from Aleppo and other besieged areas were thrown into doubt again Sunday after militants burned buses assigned to the rescue operation.

The Aleppo evacuations were to have been part of a wider deal that would simultaneously allow more than 2,000 sick and wounded people to leave two pro-government villages that have been besieged by Syrian rebels. Most villagers are Shiite Muslims, while most rebels are Sunni Muslims.

Six buses that were among those poised to enter the villages of Foua and Kfarya on Sunday were set on fire by unidentified militants, presumably to scuttle any deal.

A video posted online showed armed men near the burning buses as celebratory gunshots rang out. "The buses that came to evacuate the apostates have been burned," the narrator of the video said. He warned that no "Shiite pigs" would be allowed to leave the towns. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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URBAN ETIQUETTE ELLEN VANSTONE

THE QUESTION

My girlfriend says I have an obligation to visit my drinking buddy's new baby. Is she right?

Dear Ellen,

My best drinking buddy and his wife had a baby a few weeks ago, so he's basically under house arrest for the foreseeable future. I ran into him at a work thing and congratulated him. Now my (sort of) girlfriend tells me I'm socially obligated to go see the actual baby. She seemed incredibly shocked I haven't visited already. Seriously? I have no interest in kids, and doubt the baby gives a diaper-load whether I show up or not. But I don't want to offend anyone either. What's the etiquette here?

Dave

Dear Dave,

Yes, you must go see the baby.

You are right to assume the baby will have as much interest in you as you have in it: zero. In fact, I have a clear mental picture of the entire encounter. Based on nothing more than your clueless attitude and an old boyfriend of mine named Dave, I see you as a man-child-about-town who likes a drink, considers shaving optional and is a good buddy but an undomesticated nightmare of a boyfriend. I imagine your stubbled mug looming over the crib as you exhale alcoholic fumes left over from the previous night's debauchery, while the small human blob trapped by your gaze immediately bursts into tears of terror and disgust.

I must confess, I myself did not appreciate how important this point of etiquette was until I had my own baby.

So be it. The kid will survive, and you will have done your duty. No one is expecting you to forge any kind of meaningful relationship with the blob (assuming you're even capable of forming any kind of meaningful relationship). What we do ask is that you politely honour your friend and his wife's gigantic rite of passage by making an effort to show up.

I must confess, I myself did not appreciate how important this point of etiquette was until I had my own baby. Obviously, close friends and family came by. But I found myself deeply touched when less-close friends and acquaintances also took the trouble to visit or send cards and gifts from afar. It bolstered my nervous-new-mom confidence to share the joy of my daughter's arrival in the world, and the superstitious side of me (which often appears in even the most skeptical of first-time mothers) took all the well-wishing as valuable deposits to a good-luck account that I suddenly realized all children needed in a world that suddenly seemed full of peril.

A small gift is also in order — some kind of stuffie or board book easily obtainable online or from a store recommended by your long-suffering, better-mannered, "sort-of" girlfriend.

If you need to brace yourself any further, please don't use alcohol to do so. Just YouTube "Seinfeld ugly baby" and watch the clip where Jerry and Elaine go to the Hamptons to visit friends who have a hideous newborn infant. If those self-absorbed losers can muster the manners to pretend the baby is cute and worth viewing, I'm sure you can too.

Need advice?
Email Ellen:
scene@metronews.ca

VICKY MOCHAMA

We were promised flying cars; we got a potato chip golden age

This is the future we've been waiting for, and man, is it disappointing.

We spent decades watching feature packages on the nightly news that breathlessly fawned over robots from Japan and cars with abstract design concepts like see-through tires and free will. Yet I still have to take out my own garbage.

(The dog robots were, I think, a mistake. Who wants something with none of the physical ability of a dog, a third as much charm, and one battery too many? If the death of a family dog is traumatic, imagine the emotional havoc of one that powers down midwalk.)

There are plenty of marvellous things about this present world. Nothing but good things can be said of the explosion of potato chip flavors. Entire families have been saved from misadventure and divorce by never having to open a paper map thanks to GPS. Hosannas should be sung to the twin saviors of Google and Apple for sparing countless dinner parties or meetings from devolving into terminal awkwardness through the misapplication of facts.

So, yes, there is a great deal of good by our present technological standards. I am bad enough at texting to know that I would have been a terrible letter writer.

But what happened to all the cool gadgets and experiences we were supposed to have? Why did the end of the space race mean that hover boots are no longer necessary? The Russians may no longer be the enemy (well, maybe; stay tuned), but why does that mean my house cannot casually greet me when I return home via the Tube — that is, a tube that digitally transports humans?

I understand the Cold War was a scary time. Nuclear destruction lurked, spies were everywhere, and the hopes of nations rested on their children's ability to learn math. But we in the West were working towards something at least. America was perfecting the school bully routine that would make it both the beloved high school quarterback of the last half-century and the current hustling salesman for a declining corporation ("Slide joyfully into crushing death. Go. With Visa.")

Canada was right alongside, auditioning for the role of high school sweetheart by softening squabbles, making peace where possible, and being a laid back, less athletic Australia. Australia reached peak whiteness by getting very good at cricket, rugby, surfing and marginalizing aboriginals. And the Europeans pulled slowly out of post-war penury and straight into state-sponsored vacationing. As a group, we flourished.

And then we didn't. Neofascism in Europe, Brexit, Trump, whatever is probably going wrong in Australia: Something seems to have gone terribly wrong in the West and I, for one, blame the fact that my crossword app drains my phone battery.

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Julia Roberts to star in her first small-screen project, an adaptation of Today Will Be Different

New lice policy has parents itching

STOCK

CHILDREN'S HEALTH

Bugging over a more relaxed approach to nits in schools

Genna Buck
Metro Canada

It's a problem that bugs just about every family with school-age kids at some point.

Pediculosis, a.k.a. head lice, is icky, uncomfortable and hard to prevent. But it's not serious or a cause of disease.

And these days, lice-infested youngsters are, mostly, allowed to be in school — a policy that would have been unthinkable in their parents' day.

Tara Auger of Belleville, Ont., was so infuriated when her six-year-old daughter came home with head lice that she paid a visit to her local school board office and health unit this month, child in tow, to make a point.

"The school board was not excited to see me as I brought my daughter with active head lice into the building and allowed her to rub her head onto their chairs and couches. It shouldn't bother them ... since they are allowing kids to pass it around at schools on a daily basis," she wrote in a Facebook post that was shared over 550 times. "If they aren't going to force kids to stay home then there is no motivation for some to treat their kids."

School boards around the country have been bringing their head lice procedures into line with the Canadian Pediatric Society's recommendations, which say there's no rational reason to exclude children with nits or live lice from school or daycare.

According to Dr. Carl Cummings, an author of the CPS lice guidelines, kids found to have live lice don't need to be picked up from school or day care immediately. They can be sent home at the final bell with a note asking parents to use an over-the-counter treatment to kill the critters, and return the next day. A second treatment is recommended in a week or two, just in case some eggs survived.

But some parents are itching to reinstate a traditional, aggressive "no-nit" rule instead. (The Toronto District School Board is an exception. It still has a "no-nit" policy, though it's under review).

Auger started a Change.org petition to bring federal Health Minister Jane Philpott's attention to the issue. It has 500 signatures. A similar one, started by someone else and addressed to Ontario education minister Liz Sandals, has more than 1,000. Facebook groups for parents lamenting the new, liberal approach to lice abound.

The main grouse about the louse: It's unfair to diligent parents that kids with untreated lice are allowed to be in the classroom, constantly re-infecting everyone around them.

Until recently, parents were required to comb out every last louse and egg (nit) before their child was allowed back at school. They were advised to wage war on lice at home: vacuum rugs and furniture, wash the whole family's clothes and bedding in hot water.

Auger said she missed several days of work and kept her daughter home while she went on an anti-lice tear, spending 10 hours in four days combing out nits ("It's basically torture") and cleaning her house top to bottom. The cost, including the treatments, the nit comb, dozens of loads of laundry and lost wages: about $500.

Dr. Cummings said going to such lengths to battle lice is — pun intended — "overkill."

No-nit policies were "creating an atmosphere of worry over something that is annoying, itchy and pretty gross, but in no way endangers anybody's actual health," he said.

Cummings admitted he'd be pretty "appalled" if parents neglect to treat head lice they've been notified about.

Yet it happens, says one Ontario kindergarten teacher, who didn't want to be named.

> **There is no motivation for some to treat their kids.**
> Tara Auger, who went to her local school board office after her daughter Cali came home with head lice

"Last year our school had one ... family (where) the parents just gave up on it."

The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario takes no position on the issue, except that teachers' shouldn't be required to do lice checks. The kindergarten teacher favours a middle-ground policy: No-nits is too extreme, but "If there's live lice, the child should be home. Then it's a burden on everybody."

Like many teachers and parents, he doubts the experts' position that most lice spread by direct contact, and that nits alone aren't an infestation.

"I don't have any research base on that," he said. "It's sheer experience."

His school doesn't require kids to be lice-free or provide proof of treatment, but does send them home with a free bottle of medicated shampoo if necessary.

"Our whole society is pushing more and more on the school."

Get rich quicker in the new year

ADVICE

No better time to take stock and get your money working

Gail Vaz-Oxlade
For Metro Canada

Where the hell did 2016 go? Holy moley! And can you believe how easy it was to ignore the details of your financial life when everything was rushing past you like a sped-up movie scene. Time to stop, take a breath, and take stock. Living in ignorance of what's worked and what hasn't is not the way to a successful 2017, which is just around the corner. So here we go:

1. Complete a net-worth statement. How do you feel about what you accomplished financially in 2016? What's the biggest financial concern you have right now? What one thing do you want to accomplish before another year rolls past?

2. Update your budget. Did you stick to plan? What should you tweak for 2017? Once you get comfortable living on a budget, you might also get complacent about costs that are going up. Is it time to do some trimming? Have prices risen in some areas of your budget, indicating that you need to trim in other areas to rebalance? Are there other changes — partnering, babies, job changes — that have taken place since you did your budget that you need to incorporate officially?

3. Review your debt repayment plan. Some people find it hard to imagine being debt free. But you can be. It may take another job to earn the extra money to get out of debt. But if that's what it takes, you can do it. Are you on target to be debt-free by a specific date? Is that date realistic? Do you have a debt-repayment plan in writing?

4. Assess your emergency savings. It takes small steps to get to where you want to be. Having six months' worth of essential expenses isn't a nice to have, it's a gotta have.

5. Look at your retirement plan. Are you taking advantage of the savings-matching program at work? Why the hell not? That's free money! Would you turn down a raise? If you don't have a work plan, then you must have an individual retirement savings plan.

6. Quantify your investment return. Are the investment choices you made still working for you? Are you well diversified?

This would be a good time to adjust the investments that may have fallen out of whack with your goals and tolerance for risk.

7. Review your insurance coverage: car, property, life and disability. If you think insurance is a waste of money, answer me this: As if a life disaster isn't bad enough, would it be fair to you and your family to be financially wiped out at the same time?

The beginning of a new year is a perfect time to make sure you're financially on track. ISTOCK

8. Review your will. And how about your powers of attorney for both personal care and money? Have you named a guardian for your children? Have you reviewed this documentation in the last two years, or since your last major life change (marriage, divorce, moving, birth of a child)?

You work hard for your money. And at the same time, it should work equally hard for you. The beginning of the year is a perfect time to make sure you're on track and your money is doing what you want it to.

For more money advice, visit Gail's website at gailvazoxlade.com

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Share a bit of Canada cool

Holiday Ideas

With just under a week to go before the holidays, you've managed to pare down your gift list to just a few last names. To help you cross off that hard-to-buy-for person, our editors from coast to coast have picked a unique, locally made gift. METRO

Edmonton's got edge

The J5 Table is Edmonton's answer to its critics. Edmonton is cool, hip and infused with a maker culture that many don't see from afar, and the J5 is that taken to new heights, hand made from concrete, wood and glass. Made by Ryspot Designs in Edmonton.

Available at: ryspot.bigcartel.com, $450

Political Circus, happening in Toronto

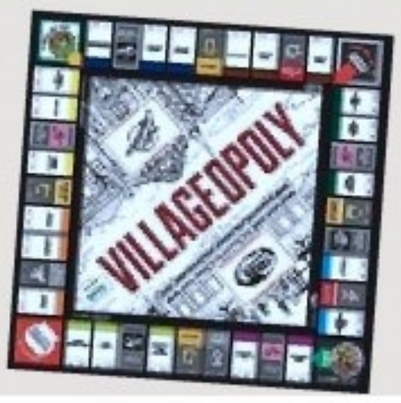
Toronto artist Gabe Thirlwall says popularity of her "political puppets" often mirrors opinion polls — the Justin Trudeau doll is still selling, although not as well as last year, and requests for Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne have dropped. Among this season's best-liked finger puppets, made by silkscreen on mixed textile, are defence minister Harjit Singh Sajjan and Calgary mayor Naheed Nenshi. The pop art project is called Political Circus, aimed at public engagement in politics. **Available at: Etsy/shop/PoliticalCircus, $15 each**

A little practicality coming from Ottawa

Purple Urchin sells environmentally friendly, handcrafted soaps. The Ottawa-based company has dozens of delicious scents to choose from and the prices are reasonable. This is a practical gift for even the most hard-to-shop-for person. **Available at: purpleurchinsoap.com, $5.99 per bar**

The Peg's hot market

Pass Wild Planet. Collect $200. In the Villageopoly board game — a version of Monopoly modelled after Canada's "great neighbourhood," Winnipeg's Osborne Village — you can own one of the strip's hip restaurants or boutiques. Proceeds go to the local Gas Station Arts Centre. **Available at: Call 204-284-9477 or email development@gsac.ca, $50**



Lobster-claw snowflake from the Maritimes

It doesn't get more Nova Scotian than Jampy Furniture's ocean-themed snowflake ornaments. All four designs, particularly the lobster claw, capture the unique flavour of the Maritimes. **Available at: facebook.com/jampyfurniture, $12.50 each or $45 for the set of four.**

Mismatched but looking good in Calgary

Calgary-based biz Friday Sock Company has your feet in mind — and they want them to stand out... by mismatching your socks! Canadian designed, these socks might not look exactly alike, but they look good together. **Available at: fridaysock.co, approximately $15 per set**

Radiating style in Vancouver

East Vancouver's Woodtype Shop creates custom made ultra-cool wooden signs (with lights) that radiate with warm, funky style. Choose the word, style, font, size and colour pallet and then just chill. **Available at: woodtype.ca, $750 (prices vary by sign)**

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metro SPORTS

After their latest loss, the Jacksonville Jaguars fired Gus Bradley, ending the least successful coaching tenure (14-48, .225) in NFL history

Tortorella earns 500th win

NHL

Blue Jackets squeak past Canucks early in overtime

The Columbus Blue Jackets made John Tortorella sweat for his 500th NHL victory. Columbus blew leads of 2-0 and 3-2 in the third period before Seth Jones scored 46 seconds into overtime Sunday as the Blue Jackets defeated the Vancouver Canucks 4-3 for their ninth straight win.

Tortorella is the first U.S.-born coach to reach 500 victories, and while he downplayed the accomplishment, Columbus captain Nick Foligno said it was a special moment when he handed the 58-year-old the game puck in a boisterous locker-room.

"He says it doesn't mean (anything), but it's a lot of wins," said Foligno. "He's gone through a roller-coaster of a career going through so many things. We're really happy to have him at the helm here. He's really helped push this group forward. Really gratifying for all the guys to see him get that." Tortorella, who took over seven games into last season, has the Blue Jackets (20-5-4) firing on all cylinders a third of the way through 2015-16 with points in 11 straight (10-0-1) to sit in the mix near the top of the powerhouse Metropolitan Division.

"I have been so privileged to have the opportunity to coach as many games as I have in the league," Tortorella said after becoming the 24th coach in NHL history to reach 500 wins.

"To get this opportunity with this club when there are so many other people dying to get in, that's what I'm so grateful for. Not numbers, just having the opportunity." But it looked like Tortorella might not get another opportunity after one forgettable season with the Canucks in 2013-14, a campaign that saw the team miss the playoffs for the first time since 2008.

"It makes no difference, quite honestly," Tortorella said when asked if getting to 500 against the Canucks meant more.

"Coming here is fun for me because I have a lot of friends here. You guys may think that: 'He wants to get back at them.' That's not the way I am thinking. It's a tremendous city, the people always treated me well."

SUNDAY In Vancouver

4	3
JACKETS	CANUCKS

Brandon Saad, with two, and Cam Atkinson, with a goal and an assist, scored in regulation for Columbus, while Sergei Bobrovsky made 14 saves for his league-leading 19th win. Alexander Wennberg added two assists.

Brandon Sutter, Daniel Sedin and Jannik Hansen replied for Vancouver (13-16-3). Ryan Miller finished with 21 stops.

Jones scored his fifth of the season on a 2-on-1 break with Atkinson in the extra period after Vancouver's Ben Hutton hit the post at the other end.

Blue Jackets left-winger Brandon Saad celebrates scoring a goal with teammate Boone Jenner as Canucks defenceman Alex Biega and goaltender Ryan Miller look on in Vancouver on Sunday. JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Jones was actually caught up the ice after his stick flew into the Canucks bench and he seemed to have to battle to pry it loose.

"I knew Cam was going to make a great play," said Jones. "I didn't know if he was going to shoot or not so I just went to the net with my stick down."

Down 2-0 after two periods, the Canucks got one back when Sutter scored his ninth on a power play, and third goal in as many games, at 2:51 of the third. Vancouver, which picked up a much-needed 4-2 victory over Tampa Bay on Friday following a demoralizing road trip, evened things when Daniel Sedin's slapshot from well out deflected off Columbus defenceman Jack Johnson's skate and passed a surprised Bobrovsky at 7:42.

The Blue Jackets retook the lead with 4:39 in regulation when Saad scored his second of the game on a nice feed from Wennberg, but Hansen tied it on a shot that went off Columbus defenceman Ryan Murray with 1:09 left on the clock.

"We found a way to get back in the third, not once but twice," said Hansen. "We had an opportunity in overtime as well. Those little margins are whether or not you get two points."

That the Canucks fought back at all came as a bit of surprise considering the Blue Jackets had surrendered just four goals combined in the third period over their last 15 games. THE CANADIAN PRESS

"I have been so privileged to have the opportunity to coach as many games as I have in the league
John Tortorella

SURGERY

Vancouver Canucks defenceman Erik Gudbranson will undergo surgery to repair ligament damage in his wrist.

The team said a timeline on Gudbranson's recovery will be provided after the surgery.

The announcement comes after the Canucks moved Gudbranson to injured reserve last week for what was then an unspecified ailment. THE CANADIAN PRESS

SPEEDSKATING

Hamelin captures gold on short track

Charles Hamelin won gold and Charle Cournoyer took bronze in a men's 1,000-metre race as Canada claimed four medals Sunday at a World Cup short-track speedskating stop in Gangneung, South Korea.

The Canadian men's relay team collected a medal for the first time this season by earning silver, while the women's relay team won bronze as Canada ended the two-day event with nine medals.

Charles Hamelin GETTY IMAGES FILE

"I really wanted to give everything to find my way onto the podium, find some confidence and get some good vibes in this building before leaving, because the next time we will come here, it will probably be during the Olympics," Hamelin said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN BRIEF

Raptors cruise past Magic
DeMar DeRozan scored 31 points and Jonas Valanciunas added 16 points and 13 rebounds, helping the Toronto Raptors beat the Orlando Magic 109-79 on Sunday night.

DeRozan has scored at least 30 points in four straight games and 15 times overall this season. Toronto exploded in the third quarter to open a 20-point lead and has scored 100 points in 14 consecutive games, the longest active streak in the NBA. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ronaldo tricks plucky Antlers
Cristiano Ronaldo scored a hat trick on Sunday as European champions Real Madrid beat Japanese side Kashima Antlers 4-2 to win the Club World Cup and extend their unbeaten run to 37 games.

Ronaldo took a pass from Karim Benzema in the 98th minute and calmly fired under Kashima goalkeeper Hitoshi Sogahata to make it 3-2. The Portuguese star then sealed the win seven minutes later with a left-footed strike. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PREMIER LEAGUE

Sane and Sterling shoot down Gunners

Raheem Sterling capped a rousing second-half comeback by Manchester City with the winning goal as Arsenal squandered a lead to lose 2-1 for the second time in five days in the English Premier League on Sunday.

The England winger collected Kevin De Bruyne's sensational cross-field pass before driving home a low finish in the 71st minute at Etihad Stadium. Arsenal led through Theo Walcott's fifth-minute strike —another goal that exposed City's defensive frailties — before Leroy Sane equalized in the 47th with his first goal for City. Elsewhere Spurs beat Burnley 2-1 at home while Southampton earned a 3-1 away win at Bournemouth. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SUNDAY in Manchester

2	1
MAN. CITY	ARSENAL

Packers put Bears on ice

NFL

Green Bay keeps its cool to win fourth straight game

Aaron Rodgers and the Green Bay Packers were rolling along with a big lead, looking as though they would take another step toward a playoff spot and the top of the NFC North.

Once it disappeared, they still found a way to pull out the victory.

Rodgers hit Jordy Nelson with a 60-yard pass to set up Mason Crosby's 32-yard field goal as time expired, lifting the Green Bay Packers to a 30-27 victory over the Bears in one of the coldest games (-11 C) ever played in Chicago on Sunday.

Wide receiver-turned-running back Ty Montgomery ran for a career-high 162 yards and two touchdowns. Micah Hyde broke up a potential go-ahead touchdown pass, and the Packers (8-6) earned their fourth straight victory despite blowing a 27-10 lead in the fourth quarter.

They also moved ahead of Minnesota for sole possession of second place in the NFC North and pulled within a game of division leader Detroit, with the Vikings getting pounded by Indianapolis and the Lions losing to the New York Giants.

"I think we have a lot of grit as a team," Rodgers said. "We stick together in adverse situations. There wasn't any finger pointing after 27-10 turned into 27-27 for either side. We just knew we had to go out and make something happen. It's fun to be standing here at 8-6. We all know what 4-6 felt like. It was tough."

For the Bears (3-11), it was more of the same.

They had tied it on a field goal by Connor Barth with 1:19 left. The Packers took over at their 27, and on third-and-11 at the 26, Rodgers unleashed a deep pass down the middle of the field to Nelson, who got behind Cre'Von LeBlanc.

With no timeouts, the Packers downed the ball before Crosby booted his winner.

"The team has a lot of character," Chicago defensive end Akiem Hicks said. "The team has a lot of players who are willing to fight to the end, put everything on the line. This is our life. This is what we do." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Packers receiver Jordy Nelson hauls in a 60-yard reception ahead of the Bears' Cre'von LeBlanc on Sunday in Chicago.
JOE ROBBINS/GETTY IMAGES

NFL

Sixth win escapes Bucs in Dallas

Ezekiel Elliott celebrated a short touchdown run by jumping into an oversized Salvation Army red kettle and the Dallas Cowboys closed in on home-field advantage in the playoffs with a 26-20 victory over the Tampa Bay Buccaneers on Sunday night.

The Cowboys (12-2) bounced back after their franchise-record 11-game winning streak ended, hanging on after what looked to be a festive night following Elliott's antics turned tense when Jameis Winston rallied the Bucs from a 17-3 deficit to a 20-17 lead.

Making his debut in the Sunday night spotlight, Winston threw for 247 yards and two touchdowns but had four turnovers, including an interception that led to Dan Bailey's 38-yard field goal that gave Dallas a 23-20 lead early in the fourth quarter.

Tampa Bay (9-5) had its five-game winning streak snapped and fell a game behind Atlanta in the NFC South.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WEEK 15 SCORES

THURSDAY
Seahawks 24, Rams 3

SATURDAY
Dolphins 34, Jets 13

SUNDAY
Texans 21, Jaguars 20
Giants 17, Lions 6
Packers 30, Bears 27
Bills 33, Browns 13
Steelers 24, Bengals 20
Titans 19, Chiefs 17
Colts 34, Vikings 6
Ravens 27, Eagles 26
Saints 48, Cardinals 41
Falcons 41, 49ers 13
Patriots 16, Broncos 3
Raiders 19, Chargers 16
Cowboys 26, Buccaneers 20

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MAKE IT TONIGHT

Easy Cheese Pear Melt

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

Our goal this week is fast and easy dinner. This grilled cheese is amped up with delicious extras like sliced pears and mushrooms and a hit of Dijon for zing.

Ready in 15 minutes
Prep time: 5 minutes
Cook time: 10 minutes
Serves 1

Ingredients
- Butter
- Cremini mushrooms, thinly sliced
- Pumpernickel bread
- Dijon mustard (optional)
- Fontina cheese, grated
- Pears, thinly sliced

Directions

1. In a skillet, melt a pat of butter over medium heat. Toss in sliced mushrooms and push around until they soften. Remove from pan and set aside. Wipe pan.

2. Butter bread (and swipe other side with a bit of Dijon) and place each piece in pan, butter side down. Place a handful of Fontina on each, then press down a couple of slices of pear, followed by a spoonful of mushrooms. Place another piece of pumpernickel on top, butter side out. Let sizzle 2 or 3 minutes, peeking at the underside with a spatula to ensure bread is toasting not burning. Flip.

3. Allow to grill for a couple more minutes then remove from the heat. Cut in half and serve warm.

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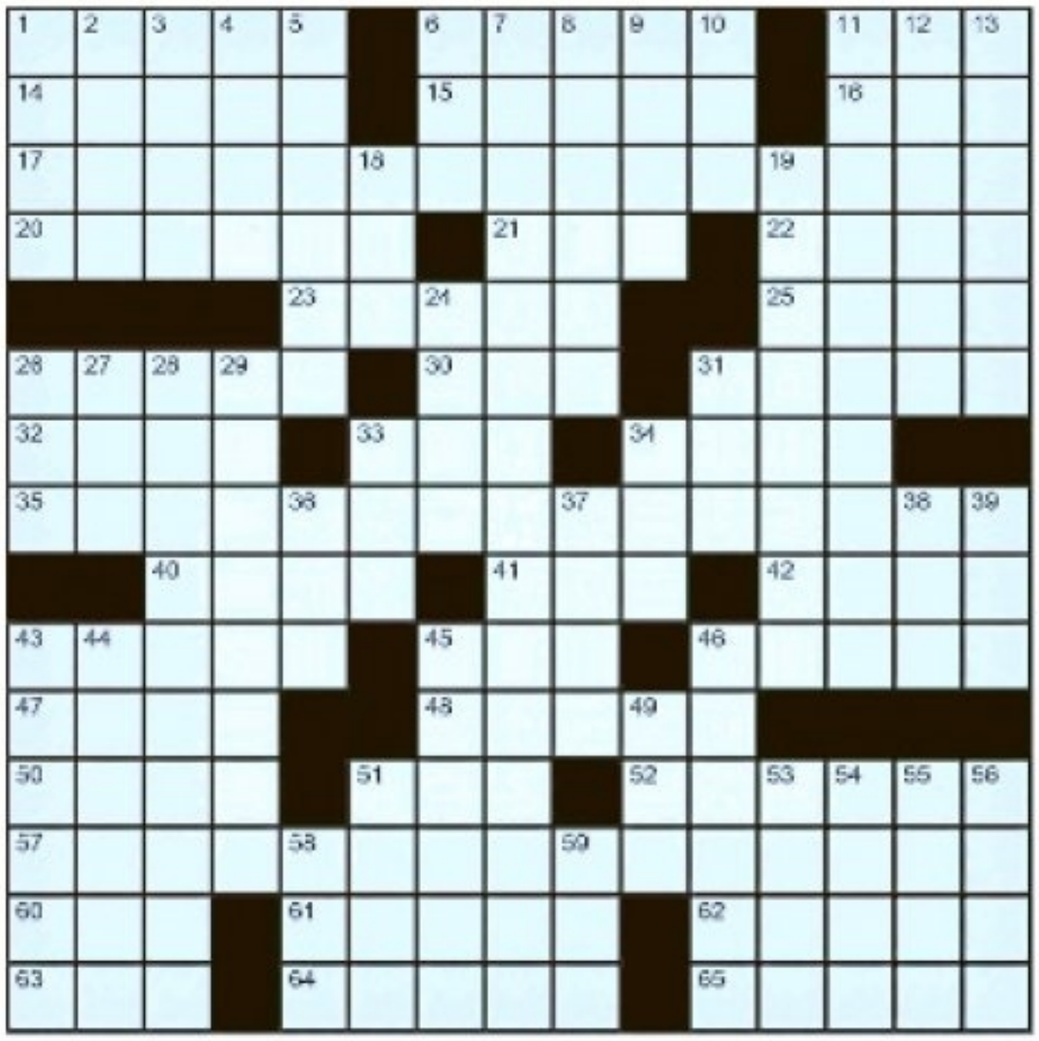
CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Jewelry fastener
6. Tropical beach gear
11. Boxer's size stat.
14. Broadcaster
15. Taboos
16. Charlemagne's li'l domain
17. Christmas Eve gifts for Santa: 3 wds.
20. Send word
21. Merriment
22. 'Meteor' suffixes
23. Serenity, __ peace
25. Filmmaker Ms. Riefenstahl
26. __ kit (Heath 'cleanse' purchase)
30. Water wiggler
31. Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? playwright Edward
32. Story told backwards?
33. Food scrap
34. Latin hymn: "Dies __"
35. "Sleigh Ride" bit: "We're riding along with a song / Of a ____"
40. Christmastime
41. Wheat: French
42. Montana's motto, '__ Plata'
43. Krispy __ Doughnuts
45. Mr. Gore's
46. Swamp plant
47. Canadian hardware store
48. Respond
50. Book's ID
51. Ms. Messing, mini-ly
52. Rooming house tenant
57. Christmastime 'tis the what?: 4 wds.
60. Sigma's alphabetic follower
61. Lake __ (American ski resort area)
62. __ Lumpur, Malaysia
63. "Delish!"
64. City of Honshu in Japan
65. Suze __ (Personal finance TV personality)

DOWN
1. Cereal brand, __'__ Crunch
2. "__ & Stitch" (2002)
3. "How now, ___?" - Hamlet
4. Son of Ramses I
5. 'Hemi' or 'Micro', for example
6. Ski hill machine, __-Cat
7. Literary purchase that also serves as a home decor feature: 3 wds.
8. Straighten hair
9. Benefit
10. Mount __ (Volcano in Japan)
11. Santa Claus feature: 2 wds.
12. Canadian star Lorne of "Bonanza"
13. Music hall star Ms. O'Shea who shared the billing the famous night The Beatles first appeared on "The Ed Sullivan Show" in 1964
18. Equivalent word [abbr.]
19. Eastern Ontario: The Township of __-Hagarty-Richards
24. Spongy toys brand
26. Mountain __ (Soft drink)
27. 'E' in REO
28. Christmas carol from Germany: "O __"
29. Living room pieces
31. 'Bound' suffix
33. Popeye's sweetie Olive
34. U2's li'l land
36. Riddle-me-__
37. Ingrid's celebrated movie role
38. Eggy Christmas beverage
39. Tie-__
43. Ms. Swanson of "Buffy the Vampire Slayer" (1992)
44. Dominica's capital
45. Vocal legend Ms. Franklin
46. Canadian skater Elvis
49. Canadian actor Mr. Bennett
51. Scientific 'strands'
53. Sullen
54. 1970s music genre, __ Rock
55. "__ Enchanted" (2004)
56. Mr. Seacrest
58. It means 'Ear'
59. Maude's portrayer

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS Your daily horoscope by Francis Drake

Aries March 21 - April 20
Grab every chance to travel, because you need a change of scenery. Likewise, you will love to learn something new if you take a course or study something unusual.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
You can make headway clearing up loose details about shared property, inheritances, taxes and debt. Just roll up your sleeves and dig in. Now is the time!

Gemini May 22 - June 21
You can learn a lot about your style of relating to friends, spouses and partners at this time. Observe your style of dealing with those who are closest to you.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
You have a lot of stuff, and anything you do to help you feel better organized is a good thing. What can you do today to make your life run more smoothly?

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
You want to play and take time off from drudgery, even if it's just catching a game or going out for dinner or seeing a movie. You need some fun!

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Because you will likely earn more money soon, this is a good time to think about how you can make home repairs. You also might be focused on a parent more than usual.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
This is a busy time for you, because short trips, reading, writing and talking to everyone will keep you on the go. Enjoy this accelerated pace.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
It's important to know what your money situation is. How much do you own? How much do you make? How much do you owe? Knowledge is power.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Make the most of this time with three planets are in your sign. It's easy to attract positive situations now, which means you can come out on top.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You might want to hide for a few days, because you're not ready to step out into the world. When your birthday arrives, things will be different.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Enjoy your popularity with others now. Probably more than any other sign in the zodiac, friendships mean a lot to you.

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Because you look so good to bosses and VIPs, use this time to go after what you want. Promote your own agenda. Speak up.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

					6	1		
				4			8	
				8			4	7
	4	9			2	7		
5			3	7	1		6	
1							2	
	8						9	
		6	7	2	4	3		
			6		8			

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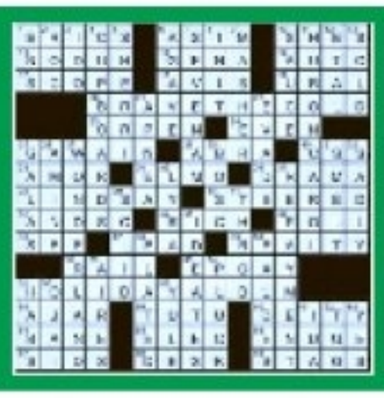

6	9	2	8	3	7	5	4	1
4	5	8	6	1	9	2	3	7
3	7	1	4	2	5	9	8	6
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1	6	3	5	7	4	8	2	9
2	8	7	3	9	6	4	1	5
7	3	6	9	4	8	1	5	2
8	2	9	1	5	3	6	7	4
5	1	4	7	6	2	3	9	8

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